" POLITICAL STATUS OF ABORIGINAL SIDDI TRIBAL PEOPLE IN UTTARA KANNADA DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA STATE "

A SYNPOSIS (RESEARCH PROPOSAL) SUBMITTED TO SWAMI RAMANANDA TEERTH MARATAWADA UNIVERSITY NANDED FOR FULFILMENT OF THE Ph.D.IN POLITICAL SCENCE

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May-2019

Introduction:

In Karnataka there are 31 districts, in these Uttar Kannada is biggest district, this is also called as North Kanara and Karwar. In Uttar Kannada district there are ten talukas these are Haliyal, Bhatkal , Sirsi , Yallapur , Siddapur ,Mundgod , Honnavar, Ankola, Kumata and Zoida, Uttar Kannada district surrounded by Arabian sea and Western Ghats . It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is the one of the eight 'hottest hotspots' of biological diversity in the world. In this Western Ghats region Siddi, Gouli, Kunabi, Vokkaliga, Halaki and Gonda etc tribes. are settled. In these tribes Siddi's can be identified as distinct group totally different in features from the rest of the people living in the area.

Siddi's are found in various parts of India Specially Gujarat, Goa, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Most of them were brought as slaves and a few came as traders. The slave trade between India and Africa throws some light on the origin of Siddi's and their cultural life.

In Karnataka Siddi's are found mainly in the Western Ghats of the Uttara Kannada district and also in some parts of Belgaum and Dharwad district of Karnataka State. These siddi's are aboriginals they supposed to have descended from South Africa. The siddi's in Karnataka were brought as slaves by the Portuguese in Goa and with the abolition of slavery, siddi tribal migrated to thick forest of Uttara Kannada. Then they have settled in the Western Ghats. This ignorance often lead to their social exploitation and violation of their political and Human rights in particular political status.

Etymology of name:

African origin people in India are called as Siddi ,there are conflicting hypotheses on the origin of the name Siddi. One theory is that the word Siddi is derived from the Arabic **"sayyid" or "sayydi"** meaning **Leader or Master**. It means the tittle borne by the captain of the Arab vessels that first brought Siddi settlers to Indian. There captains were known as **sayyid,** another theory is that **North Africans** call each other **'sidi'** as a title of respect. Today all African origin people in India were however called **"siddi"**even though they were not all from North Africa.

History of Siddis of Karnataka:

These siddi's had come from different centuries of East-Africa mainly from **Mozambique & Tanzania** at different period from the 14^{th}& 16^{th} centuries by the Portuguese and Arabs, Most of them were brought as slaves and sold to local kings like Bijapur Sultan,Mayur Varma of Kadamba ,they were sold like cattle's in public market ,During that period price of Siddi slave is just 30 Krujadu but horse price is 500 Krujadu ,Thus they were treated like animals , their life is not better than animals, In this intolerable condition Some of siddi slaves were escaped and took shelter deep in the forests of Western Ghats region of Karnataka, later some siddi people working in agriculture fields of Havik Brahmins of uttara Kannada district. Thus slave trade between India and Africa throws some light on the origin of Siddis and their social life.Today the Siddi tribal people are found mainly in Western Ghats of Uttar Kannada district specially **Dandeli, Yellapur, Haliyal, Ankola, Joidu, Mundgod** and in **Khanapur** of Belgaum,**Kalghatagi** of Dharwad district of Karnataka .These siddis wanted to gift a bottle of honey to **U.S.A** former President Shree **BARACK OBAMA** on his visit to India in 2010.

Historical References :

In India , especially in Karnataka the siddi people gained a reputation for their Physical Strength &Loyality. In Delhi sultanate during period **Jamul-Ud-Din Yagut** was a prominent Siddi slave turned nobleman who was a close confidant of Razia Sultana, Although this is disputed , he may also had been her lover. A Siddi called Gajaveera is noted to have joined hands with Sangoli Rayanna. In the revolt of 1844 at Sawantwadi in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, records show that two Siddi brothers, **Bastian and Benova,** from **Punsolli** near Dandeli had been enlisted by Phensawant, a noble of the Sawantwadi Court.

The Role of the Siddi people in Indian freedom fighting is also considerable.The notable act of Siddi people seems to have been their looting of a British outpost during the surprising when they confiscated government funds, took many chaukidar (watchmen) and burnt several outposts, there are also references to a formidable fight at Dandeli, these activities continued for several months and the Bristish eventually sentence some of siddis.

Demographics:

Karnataka has the largest concentration of Siddis in India. According to latest estimates there are around 3.700 Siddi families in the state with a total population of 18,000.Other siddhi populations in the sub-continent include around 10,000 in Gujarat and 12,000 in Hyderabad. A few hundreds are also in Lucknow, Delhi and Calcutta. Fewer than 1,000 “Ceylon Kapris” live in Srilanka.

Social Status and Rehabilitation:

Like Siddi populations across the sub-continent, Siddhis in Karnataka also have remained isolated, neglected and economically ,socially ,political backward. Efforts are being made to Rehabilitate them. In 1984, at the instance of the secretary of the Rural welfare Trust, Dandeli of Uttara Kannada district and few others, an **"All Karnataka Siddi Development Association"** was formed to bring Siddis together works for their integrated development K.V.Subbanna, the Raman Magsaysay awardee also made some efforts in this direction with his Ninasam.

On January 8, 2003, the Union government brought the Siddis under the list of scheduled tribes with a view to empowering them constitutionally. Further, policies to provide homes for homeless Siddis, water facilities, education, employment opportunities, roads, electricity, mobile hospitals, 2 acres (8,100 m^2) of land to each siddi family and the right to collect forest products were also endorsed by parliament. It is hoped that proper implementation of these policies would go a long way in helping the Siddi community enhance their social ,economic, political status. The main language spoken by siddi's is Kannada. But they also speak Hindi ,Konkani and Marathi languages.

Religion:

Among Siddi families in Karnataka, there are Roman Catholics, Hindus and Muslims. The Haliyal taluk has population of Muslim and Christian while the Hindus population are settled in the Ghat areas of **Yellapur and Ankola.** These division in the population have hindered the development of a distinct Siddhi Self-identity. Although Siddis opt for different religion. They inter marry across religion without any reservations.

Hiriyaru worship: (Ancestors worship)

The one factor which binds the Siddis, irrespective of their religion is the Hiriyaru or ancestor worship. The dead are believed to be nearby, in the form of spirits. They are regarded as witness to be consulted by a family in all its concerns. Occasions like births, marriages and deaths, the ancestors are invoked. They are celebrating Hariyaru festival is the spirits of departed parents. It signifies a remembrance of the parents, thanking them for their care over several years and also entreating them to keep a vigil over the family in future. It is obligatory for all relatives to attend the function, thus, renewing kinship relations.

Occupation:

Mainly Siddi Women are engaged in collection of firewood and Men are engaged in collection of forest product like Fruits, herbs ,honey catching and illegal hunting. Mainly the siddi tribal people have been eking out their livelihood through wage labor and cultivation on the encroached lands in the Western Ghats forest, without any little deeds and being constantly harassed by forest department official.

Urban agglomeration has brought the tribal settlements near to cities. In such condition the tribal people go for different type of works. They may be found working on daily wage basis in industries, building and road construction and even domestic works are being chosen by girls/women of tribes.

Siddi tribal people are very traditional illiterate and parents don't wish to provide educational status , there is a wide spread feeling that the

education has no practical utility for children in these late life. This illiteracy leads to exploitation and unequal political status.

Political Organization:

The political system of Siddi serves as an important and smooth running politico-judicial function . The basic unit operates within the settlement itself . Each settlement is independent and the local unit is known as 'Siddi Sabha' Which consists of heads of all the households in a settlement . Out of them five are selected to the 'Pancha' . Thus Siddis have organised themselves into Tribal Panchayats called 'Siddi Sabha' in their communities. They have got their own Patel or a headman of the locality and the Budivant, Budivanta is head of the Subha and 'Pancha' by tradition. The post of the Budhivant has evolved itself as hereditary one. the wise-man to advise people in the matters of quarrels, marriages and such other socio-religious cases.

In the scenario, the elected post of Budhivant exists only among Christian Siddi group , and his election depends upon his leadership qualities.The post is no longer a hereditary one ,the other cotemporary Siddi are interested in present day politics. The national trend has entered this remote enclave. Today, Three men and two women have been elected in Gram Panchayats election and Halyal Taluka Pahayat President belongs to Siddi tribal women. All Karnataka Siddi Development Association was formed in 1984 to bring all the Siddi of Karnataka of different religion on a common platform to fuse them all towards their integral and coherent development , Now the same association has been renamed as Siddi Development Project, which also works for the welfare of the Siddi residing in Goa.

Political Empowerment:

The problems of empowerment aboriginal Siddi tribal areas must be dealt with in terms of social economic and political condition of the region. In India not only backward classes and women of the society are exploited in terms of political status, even Indian aboriginal tribal people especially siddi tribal people are also exploited by dominated classes of Indian society as well as Portuguese and Arabs. Even today they lived their lives in the thick forest of western Ghats region of Karnataka, unaware of the progress in outside world and they are treated as a second grade citizens. The center and state administrative policy makers also have neglected subaltern Siddi tribal people to bring them to main stream of the society. This ignorance often leads to their political, social, and economic exploitation and violation of political and human rights. This type of life of tribal people of Western Ghats region of Karnataka leads to discrimination and deprives of the political status and suppresses the political rights of the Siddi tribes, till today they are unaware of their right to vote, right to contest the election, even they do not know who are their representatives, only few leaders of siddi's decides to whom siddi people can cast their votes in different general elections and political and public participation is very less, only few siddi's are elected as Gram Panchyat and Taluk Panchayat members but they are failed to bring the attention of government towards their problems and fulfill the basic needs and facilities. There is wide spread feeling that the education has no practical utility for the children in future life. This illiteracy of Siddis leads to exploitation and unequal political status, therefore till today they have remained isolated and socially, politically untouchables and there is clear distinction of political status between Indian origin

and aborigine Siddi tribal people of Karnataka. This life condition of Siddi is hurdles to the political empowerment of Siddi's.

Important Steps taken by Government for empowerment of Siddi tribes:

- In 1986, the Siddi tribes put under backward tribe by government of Karnataka.
- In 2003, the Indian Parliament recognized only the Siddis from Uttar Kannada district as the 50th scheduled tribe in Karnataka state.
- Centre government declared policy of nutrition food for Siddi tribes.
- Karnataka Government reserve 40 crore for development programs of five tribes of Karnataka including Siddi tribe .
- Trbal development department and Karnataka government has constituted tribal polling booth in Garadolli village of Siddi tribal people on 23 April, 2019 for Lok-Sabha election.

Origin of the research problem:

The problem of political status of illiterate masses of siddi tribal areas must be dealt within terms of the social, economic and political condition of the region. Uttar Kannada district situated in the midst of the **Western Ghats** is surrounded by tribal communities. These tribes includes **siddi's ,goulis, kunabi's** and others. In these siddi's are aboriginals they supposed to have descended from South Africa. The siddhi's in Karnataka were brought as slaves by the Portuguese in Goa, and with the abolition of slavery, siddi tribal migrated to thick forest of Uttara Kannada. Than they have lived their lives in the Western Ghats unaware of the progress in the outside world, This

ignorance often lead to their social, political and economic exploitation and violation of their political and human rights in particular political status.

Objectives:

The following objectives have been taken into account for research work and these are political oriented.

- To examine the political status of Siddi's in the study area.
- To study the comparison of Indian origin & aborigine Siddi tribal in the study area according to political status.
- To understand and find a solution to unequal political rights and status.
- To study the urgent need to provide Political Rights and status amenities to the Siddi tribal

Hypothesis:

- Gradually they are able to assimilate themselves in to Indian politics at the level of the local bodies,
- Politically women need to be empowered.
- Women's seem to be behind men in terms of political rights and status,
- Youth seem to be taking greater interest in political affairs,
- There is a clear distinction of political status between Indian origin and aborigine Siddi tribal people of Karnataka,
- Decision making is done by a Siddi male leaders so for as voting is concerned.

Review Of Related Literature:

Considerable work has been done on the position of tribal people of India by different social scientists. Most of the studies regarding the position of tribal people in earlier times are based on sacred texts and deal with only Indian origin tribal people. Very little attention has been given to the aboriginal Siddi tribal people. From these texts which posit ideals, it is not possible to know the real position specially Political status of Siddi tribal people in Indian Democracy.

1. Kiran Kamal Prasad "Race, Caste, and class dynamics among the Siddis Karnataka"
2. Dr. Ravishankar Prasad " Modernization of Tribal Traditions in India"
3. P Dash Dharma "Anthropology of primitive tribes in India"
4. Dr. R.S.Hiremath "Life, Living and Language among the Siddis of North Kannada District (Ph.D Thesis)"
5. Dr. Prabhakar Pavate " Morphogenetic Study of the Siddis of Karnataka (Ph.D Thesis)"
6. Shah Anish M "Indian Siddis: African descendants with Indian Admixture"

7 Manjula Nijagannavar&S.V.Hittalmani (2010); Anthropological Demography of Siddi Tribe

Interdisciplinary relevance:

Inter disciplinary relevance of the subject is very much wide as it is a natural problem. Political status of siddi is a national level concern subject where economists, sociologists, policy makers. Politicians have a common platform to study and find solutions. More than 45000 siddi tribal people are lived in different parts of the India and if these tribal people are not treated equally in context of political status how

can we built strong democratic country and how can one excepts the socio-political development of India. The society could be enrich when siddi tribal people enjoy equal political rights & status.

Methodology:

This study mainly focuses on the primary data through an exhausted field work. Certain amount of secondary data is also collected**.**

Primary data: Field work will be conducted to know the conditions of tribal village and village dwellers in respect with their basic requirements. By direct interviews with a written schedule the first hand information will be collected.

Secondary data: Information about Siddi's political status will be collected through published books, government publication, census reports, reports from local municipal officers etc ,

Data Analysis: The data collected by primary and secondary sources will be computed and suitable statistical charts will be prepared. The same will be taken for analysis and conclusions. The guidance and help of the expert statistician will be taken to prepare and apply suitable statistical methods to get result charts and graphical representation will be made to throw light on significant matters.

Scheme of Chapterization

Chapter I Introduction

a) Karnataka state and Uttar Kannada district.
b) Objectives of the study .
c) Origin of the research problem.
d) Hypothesis.
e) Methods of study.
f) Review of the related literature

Chapter II A Historical Prospective of Siddi Tribes in India.

a) General history of the Siddi tribes in India .
b) Physical features of the Siddi people .
c) Settlement areas of Siddi's in India .
d) History of the Siddi tribes in Karnataka .
e) Role of Siddi's in Indian freedom movement .

Chapter III Historical background of the Siddi tribal people of Uttar Kannada district.

a) Origin and history of Siddi tribes of Uttar Kannada district.
b) Areas of the Siddi's settlement in Karnataka with special reference to Uttar Kannada district.
c) Demography of Siddi's in Uttar Kannada district.
d) Language of the Siddi tribes .

Chapter IV A Socio, Economic, Cultural, Religious and Political Profile of the Siddi Tribes.

a) Marriage and Family of Siddis,
b) Food habits of the Siddi's.
c) Siddi's homestead
d) Traditions and Rituals.
e) Festivals and Funeral rites.
f) Occupation of the Siddi's.
g) Associations and Organization.
h) Political organization.

Chapter V Education and Changing position of the Siddi tribes.

a) Formal education.
b) Women education.
c) Education and Changing position of the Siddi tribes.

Chapter VI Political Empowerment and Political Status of Siddi tribes: A study of Uttar Kannada district.

a) Traditional status of Siddi tribes.
b) Political status of Indian origin tribal people of Uttara Kannada.
c) Political status of aboriginal Siddi tribal people of Uttara Kannada.
d) Political empowerment Siddi tribal people .
e) Important steps taken by government for empowerment of Siddi tribes.

Chapter VII Conclusion .

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1) Kiran Kamal Prasad "Race, Caste, and class dynamics among the Siddis Karnataka"

2) Moonis Raza & Aijazuddin "An Atlas of Tribal India" (1900)

3) Manjula Nijagannavar & S.V.Hittalmani (2010) " Anthropological Demography of Siddi Tribe"

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7) Dr. R.S.Hiremath "Life, Living and Language among the Siddis of North Kannada District (Ph.D Thesis)"
8) Risley Herbart (1915) 'Peoples of India'
9) Shah Anish M "Indian Siddis: African descendants with Indian Admixture"

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To,
The Registrar
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Nanded.

Sub: Submission of synopsis to the Department of Political Science(Humanities).

With reference to the above cited subject, I the under signed Mr S,S,Hiremath has Selected as research student in RAC meeting of Political Science Department. As per University procedure and with the permission my Guide Dr. D.R Honrao I am submitting synopsis to Department of Political.

Thankng you.

Date:

Yours faithfully

Mr, S.S.Hiremath